

NEWS

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NNSA Issues Finding of No Significant Impact on Proposed Biosafety Lab at Los Alamos

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on a proposal to construct and operate a Biological Safety Level 3 Laboratory (BSL-3) at Los Alamos National Laboratory has been issued by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Office of Los Alamos Site Operations (LASO).

Corey Cruz, Acting Director of LASO, said, "This decision is based on analyses which indicate that design, construction, and operation of this facility will not have significant impacts to human health or the environment. I am convinced that the decision to construct and operate this facility will safely and securely leverage the Lab's science base to enhance national threat reduction."

The proposed lab would be used in development and evaluation of technologies such as sensors that can detect biological agents in the air or on the ground and laser-based systems that can quickly identify an outbreak of an unusual disease in animals or humans.

A predecisional draft EA that analyzed the potential environmental consequences of implementing the proposed action and its alternatives was issued on October 29, 2001. A public comment period on the draft EA was extended through January 15 of this year.

The final EA will be available to the public beginning March 6 at the NNSA Los Alamos Community Involvement and Outreach Office, 1619 Central Avenue in Los Alamos, and in Albuquerque at the Government Information Department of the University of New Mexico's Zimmerman Library.

The National Nuclear Security Administration is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy that administers the work of the nation's nuclear weapons complex.

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